



## **Environmental and Social Review Summary**

### **Ashta Hydropower Plant Project**

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*Any documentation that is attached to this ESRS has been prepared on behalf of the project sponsor, and authorization has been given for public release. MIGA has reviewed the attached documentation as provided by the applicant, and considers it of adequate quality to be released to the public, but does not endorse the content.*

Country:	Albania
Sector:	Power
Project Enterprise:	Energji Ashta Shpk
Environmental Category:	A
Date ESRS Disclosed:	November 7, 2011
Status:	Due Diligence

#### **A. Project Description**

The Energji Ashta power project is to complete a Build-Own-Operate-Transfer (BOOT) 52.9 MW run of river hydro power plant under a 35 year Concession Agreement originally entered into between VERBUND AG (Verbund) and the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Energy of the Republic of Albania in 2008. In 2010, the two Sponsors, EVN AG (EVN) and Verbund negotiated a shareholder agreement to jointly develop and operate the Project. The total project cost is expected to be approximately EUR 209 million. The hydropower project (HPP) is the fourth plant on the Drin River but the first to be built in 30 years. The project is located in the district of Shkoder in northwestern Albania. The Power Off-take Agreement and Cascade Agreement are with the Albanian public wholesale electricity supplier, KESH (Korporate Elektroenergjetike Shqiptare Sh.A.), according to which electricity will be sold for a period of 15 years.

The planned Ashta HPP is located on the Drin River in northern Albania, near the border with Montenegro. It will be the most downstream hydropower development on the Drin River Cascade, which already provides up to 93% of the country's electricity. The Ashta HPP was initially developed in the 70s and 80s and some of the structures were built in the 1970s i.e. Spathara weir. The entire project area is now cleared and has been zoned for the HPP development for decades.

The Drin River is currently used by a chain of HPPs. The project will be the last in this chain and located below the Vau i Dejes HPP, about 50 km from the outflow of the Drin River. The project consists of two stages: electricity will first be generated at Ashta I, where the Spathara reservoir with its effluent weir and small irrigation system was erected three decades ago for agriculture.

Up to  $560\text{m}^3$  of water per second will supply 45 matrix turbines. Electricity will also be generated for a second time, after a 5 km long, low-lying bypass channel close to the village of Ashta where matrix turbines will also be used (Ashta II). Ashta I will be located 200m below the Spathara reservoir existing intake and Ashta II will be placed further downstream. The project will use the existing structures of Spathara weir at the intake. As part of the concession agreement, Ashta I will require the construction of a transmission line of 1.2 km to connect to an existing overhead line. Ashta II will require the re-routing of an existing overhead line of approximately 500m.

Ashta I consists of a power house and rubber dam (moveable gate for the existing weir). Ashta II consists of a headrace channel, second power house and a tailrace channel. Both power stations will be equipped with matrix turbines. Instead of one large turbine, this technology employs several small ones. As a result, it is possible to utilize even low heads and thereby increase efficiency. The design discharge is  $560\text{m}^3/\text{s}$  for Ashta I and  $530\text{m}^3/\text{s}$  for Ashta II. Minor adaption works will take place on the existing Spathara Reservoir, which is 2.5 million  $\text{m}^3$ . The reservoir is regulated by the Spathara weir with a fixed sill, which will be amended by a rubber dam with a power scheme for operations.

Project construction started in March 2010 and is about 60% complete. The power generation units are scheduled to be completed in October 2012 and February 2013. The concrete works at the Ashta I powerhouse have substantially been completed and the electromechanical erection activities are ongoing. The finishing works for the service building at Ashta I are ongoing. The installation works of the electrical equipment at the HV switchyard Ashta I have commenced. The installation of the first rubber dam section of the Spathara weir has commenced. The concrete works at Ashta II continue. The works at the head race/tail race channel continue. MIGA guarantee is being considered for both phases.

## **Background**

The Institute of Hydro-technical Studies and Projects initially developed the Bushati (Ashta) HPP in the 70s and 80s. In February 2001, the Albanian national power utility (KESH) signed a financing and construction agreement with China Water and Electricity Corporation (CWE) for the development of this project on a turnkey basis. However, the project came to a standstill in August 2001, pending further investigation of its economic viability and environmental impacts. The project as originally conceived by CWE would have been a run-of-river plant with an installed capacity of 84 MW. The scheme featured a diversion weir, a headrace canal, an aboveground powerhouse and a tailrace canal discharging to the Buna River, some 4.5 km downstream of its confluence with the Drin River. Since Lake Shkodra – a wildlife refuge shared by Albania and Montenegro – outflows into the Buna River in the stretch where the river would be diverted into the powerhouse, its level would have been affected by the project. There would also have been impacts on farm irrigation and water wells along this section of the river. This raised not only environmental and social questions, but also riparian rights issues for the two neighboring countries. In order to address these potential impacts, the IFC was retained by the Government of Albania in 2006 to structure and implement the development of this project. Through its engagement, an alternative to the existing project was developed that would address the environmental concerns. To avoid confusion with the CWE scheme, the project was renamed Ashta HPP.

The Ashta HPP will develop the remaining head between the tailrace of the Vau i Dejes HPP and Ashta on the Drin River. The project has only a small reservoir capacity, and will operate as a true run-of-river power plant and will benefit from the already regulated flow the Drin River cascade. The Vau i Dejes power plant is directly upstream of the Spathara diversion weir. The Ashta HPP is triggered to the load set point of upstream Vau i Dejes. This power plant discharges an average annual flow of 325m<sup>3</sup>/s. The Ashta HPP will divert a maximum of 530m<sup>3</sup>/s from the Drin's base flow during periods when discharge from upstream dams is highest. The use of multiple matrix turbines will allow the company to adjust power output during other periods, while maintaining generating efficiency.

### **B. Environmental and Social Categorization**

This project is Category A. The re-design of the proposed 52.9 MW run of river hydro power project on the Drin River project could potentially result in negative impacts to: landscape, geology, seismology, hydrology, underground water quality, surface water quality, air quality, noise levels, waste water, solid waste, hazardous waste, biodiversity, worker health and safety and the socio-economic conditions. While the hydro scheme is considered "clean energy", the proposed project is also the fourth plant on the Drin River with potential cumulative impacts. In accordance with MIGA's Performance Standard 1 which discusses transboundary/riparian issues, MIGA will inform other countries that may be affected by the project. MIGA has determined that the incremental impacts of proposed HPP to the cumulative impacts on the existing cascade scheme on the riparians are small as explained in the PS1 section below.

### **C. Applicable Standards**

While all Performance Standards are applicable to this investment, based on our current information the investment will have impacts which must be managed in a manner consistent with the following Performance Standards:

- PS1: Social and Environmental Assessment and Management Systems
- PS2: Labor and Working Conditions
- PS3: Pollution Prevention and Abatement
- PS4: Community Health, Safety & Security
- PS5: Land Acquisition & Involuntary Resettlement
- PS6: Biodiversity Conservation & Sustainable Natural Resource Management

Performance Standards 7 and 8 are not expected to be triggered as no indigenous peoples or cultural heritage will be directly impacted.

### **D. Key Documents and Scope of MIGA Review**

The following documents were reviewed by MIGA:

Ashta Hydropower Plant Project, Environmental Impact Assessment Report, May 2011 prepared by ENI Consulting

Drin River Cascade Coordination Agreement between Korporata Elektroenergjetike Shqiptare Sh.a. and Osterreichische Elektrizitatzwirtschaftsaktiengesellschaft, September 30, 2008

HPP Ashta – Drin River – Detail Design for Construction Permit, Technical Report, April 2009, Verbund/Poyry

Environmental, Social, Health and Safety (ESHS) Screening Report, Private Sector Participation in the Ashta Hydro Power Plant, February 2008, prepared for IFC by SNC-Lavalin

HPP Ashta – Health and Safety Plan, Energji Ashta, October 2010

HPP Ashta – Site Safety Plan, Energji Ashta, August 2010

Republic of Albania Council of Ministers Decision No. 522, Date 30.06.2010 on the Expropriation, for Public Interest, of Immovable Properties Owners, Private Property, Affected by the Expropriation for the Purpose of Construction, Ownership, Exploitation, Maintenance and Transfer in the State’s Favor of the Project for the New Hydro Power Plant in Ashta, in the District of Shkodra (translation)

Indicative Expropriation Procedure, Appendix to the Concession Agreement, September 30, 2008

Project website: [www.energji-ashta.al](http://www.energji-ashta.al)

MIGA’s environmental specialist conducted a site visit and met with the guarantee holder, Energji Ashta staff, representatives from the Albania Ministry of Environment (permit granters), the environmental consultants (preparers of EIA), KESH’s Project Implementation Unit director for World Bank Dam Safety Project, environmental specialists at the World Bank and relevant country office staff.

## **E. Key Issues and Mitigation**

### **PS1: Social and Environmental Assessment and Management Systems**

An Environmental Impact Assessment was prepared for the project. An Environmental Management Plan (EMP) with audit and reporting requirements are contained in the EIA. The EMP includes plant safety policy, safety management plan, health services, training plans, emergency response plan, liaison responsibilities with public and other agencies. Parameters to be monitored include noise, air quality, temperature and wastewater quality, power, gas, and intake water usage.

An E&S management system consisting of construction and operations phase procedures are in place. Staffing and resource arrangements for environmental and social management are outlined in the EIA. They have been verbally committed to by Energji Ashta and procedures are functional and officers in place. The project sponsor maintains a Site Safety File (see below PS2) to address the EHS issues not covered in the EMP. Community consultation was undertaken

during the EIA process (regulatory agencies, community, industrial neighbors) as well as during the preparation of the IFC's Environmental, Social, Health and Safety (ESHS) Screening Report.

A robust analysis of potential project sites was included in the EIA where the IFC was involved in the site selection. Compared with other alternatives, this project site was chosen as it:

- Keeps at a very minimum inundation of arable land
- Has the shortest channel length, affecting a small part of the Drin River which is poorer and less valuable in habitats and biodiversity than other parts
- Does not affect Protected Areas and cultural/historic heritage sites
- Does not directly affect the Shkodra Lake ecosystem
- Does not affect the quantity and quality of underground water
- Respects environmental concerns for minimum ecological water release in the existing riverbed (agreed at 10% of the water flow)

**Cumulative impacts** – Most of the cumulative environmental impacts of the existing dams and one weir built on the Drin River cascade have already taken place over the course of 40 years. The river flow is relatively well regulated because of the lakes at its source and due to the additional storage from the cascade of the existing hydroelectric power plants. The Ashta HPP aims to exploit the remaining head between elevations 21m and 11m, benefiting from the already regulated flow. The project will divert most of the Drin River flow, and return to the river 7 km downstream of the Spathara weir. The Spathara weir is the last one built on the cascade. Ashta HPP will use and upgrade the existing weir and reservoir.

The Drin river body has been heavily modified due to human influence. The free flow regime of the river has been altered for decades, habitats were fragmented, and fish migration routes interrupted. The Ashta HPP has put in place a mitigation plan that includes the construction of a fish pass, provisions for ecological water release, erosion reduction measures, and flood protection measures to allow for increased biological activity.

As the Ashta HPP scheme is a re-design of the HPP that will make use of an existing weir, the potential cumulative impacts will be small compared with the impacts of existing larger dams and reservoirs upstream. With the Ashta HPP the level of the Spathara reservoir will increase by 1.5m, however mitigation measures will be in place to allow for fish migration and a vegetation corridor (see PS6).

The project sponsor ensures that the proposed investment complies with relevant Albanian environmental laws and regulations as well as MIGA's Performance Standards on Social and Environmental Sustainability, and relevant WBG Environmental, Health and Safety Guidelines.

#### PS2: Labor and Working Conditions

During power plant operations, Energji Ashta is expected to employ 20-25 workers. During the construction phase, several international and national contractors will be engaged and on site with approximately 100-150 workers at any given time. Energji Ashta maintains an internal Health-Safety-Environment Regulation which includes procedures for workers induction, visitor's induction, and a Site Safety File.

The Site Safety File covers the entire construction period including the commissioning period. These files are targeted to all persons and companies working at or visiting the Energji Ashta project site including Ashta I and II, the channel, the rubber dam site, the construction site camps and all traffic or site roads between these areas. All contractors are also obliged to adhere to the Site Safety File. This comprehensive File contains instructions and procedures for issues related to environmental health and safety with some of the issues being: code of conduct, registration of workers and visitors, occupational aptitude, PPE, access to construction sites, inductions and instructions, working hours, vehicles and machines, tools and equipment, site traffic and transportation, housekeeping, waste management, medical facilities, lighting fire protection, emergency system, safety at work, storage and handling of gas cylinders, storage and handling of hazardous materials, explosion protection, open holes, scaffolding, etc. An Energji Ashta Safety Officer is present on site. The contractor is obliged to appoint a qualified EHS officer to ensure compliance with all aspects of safety on site. No serious accidents have occurred since construction works started.

Local labor and working standards will be applied to all employees. These standards comply with local Albanian regulatory requirements, and are applied consistently to all direct employees and contractors. As required by law, the standards include working conditions and terms of employment, including occupational health and safety conditions (fire and life safety), recruitment standards, performance evaluation, training, etc. A human resources policy covering employment contracts, benefits, compensation, training, performance evaluation, and working conditions will be submitted to MIGA.

### PS3: Pollution Prevention and Abatement

The construction of Ashta HPP will take approximately 40 months. The two construction sites will be built, one near the Spathara weir and the other between the villages of Stajka and Kosmaci. About 5,000,000m<sup>3</sup> of earth will be moved during construction works. The EIA reviews the impacts to landscape, seismicity, land use and soil, groundwater quality, surface water quality, erosion and sedimentation, flooding, air quality, noise, waste management, and hazardous waste management both during construction and operational phases.

During construction - **Seismic hazards**, represented by soil liquefaction, fissures and soil subsidence phenomena, may cause damage to concrete structures (Ashta HPPs powerhouses, Spathara weir, and headrace and tailrace channels). **Mitigation measures** proposed include: taking into account seismic hazard parameters recommended from the Seismic Hazard Evaluation Study, drainage channels be built at the foot of the structures, design proper geometric configuration of object and its foundations, proper construction hardware, appropriate technical solutions, emergency procedures for earthquake, and precaution measures taken for the health care of the workers and staff.

**Water quality** could potentially be impacted, despite the fact that the quantity and quality of underground water would not likely be affected during operations. The construction works sites lie on the recharge area of the groundwater. Activities such as digging machinery, the transport and the concrete works, may affect the groundwater for those wells supplying water to the villages to the left of the Drin River flow. The rise of the water level in the Spathara reservoir will inundate the small islands in the reservoir and their vegetation. As a result of the decomposed organic matter, the surface waters might be polluted, which will be extended to the

groundwater. **Mitigation measures** include that during the construction period, care will be taken to prevent the pollution of the groundwater with hazardous substances like oils, fuels, etc. In case of accidental leaking of these substances, the polluted earth will be removed to an approved disposal site. Cutting down trees and bushes, and clearing the vegetation on the small islands within the Spathara reservoir that will be inundated would reduce the chances of the pollution by the decomposing submerged vegetation.

**Flooding** - During the construction period, there will be a ban on the extraction of construction aggregates (gravels and sands) left of the Drin River, from the Spathara weir to Ashta II powerhouse, which will reduce one of the causes of flooding in the villages Shelqezi, Stajka, Kozmaci and Ashta. In conclusion, the flood risk will be no greater than prior to Ashta HPP construction. This risk will decrease as construction progresses and the Ashta HPP headrace channel is built as the latter will serve as protection for the area south of the project area. During operations, the flood risk in the southern part of the Ashta HPP headrace channel will be insignificant.

**Erosion** is expected temporarily in the case of extraordinary discharge of the Drin River. The excavation works in the Drin Riverbed and the Spathara reservoir will increase the amount of the suspended solid discharges. This amount of sediments, and in particular, the lowering of the water level from the reservoir from 19m to 16.5m will cause a temporary rise in the amount of suspended solid discharge in the Drin River. During the construction stage of Ashta HPP, there will be limited negative impact to the coastal area. It is estimated to bring some positive impact, due to the larger amount of the suspended solid discharge from the Drin River and deposited around the mouth of the Buna River.

**Air quality** could be impacted during construction with dust present throughout the project area. The intensity will vary depending on the season, the type of soil and the kind of work. Dust will be more intensive in the period of initial digging, in places where the surface layer consists of alluvium deposits, mainly silts and clays. Particularly in summer, in dry weather digging, the dust will be affecting the air of the construction works area. **Mitigation measures** include standard construction related measures like regular water sprays to surfaces, gravel barriers set up to reduce the dust to the villages near the project area and to reduce the noise made by the machinery, equipment and the vehicles at construction sites. Regular air quality monitoring will be carried out in the villages of Ashta, Kosmaci, Stajkaand, and Mjeda, which may be affected by the project works.

In order to reduce **noise** to acceptable levels in the residential areas closer to the project zone (villages of Stajka, Kosmaci and Ashta), there will be gravel barriers to serve as a buffer or absorber on the construction sites generating noises. The nearest village is about 600m from the construction site. Work hours will be respected, and there will be no working after 8.00pm.

**Waste management:** The construction activities will be carried out at two construction sites, which will house the main equipment for construction, concrete production and other equipment as well as the administration offices. The polluted waters will be generated mainly by human activities. The wastewaters will be treated in compact biological treatment plant, which the company will build up in the initial phase of the construction and run until the end of construction. This treatment plant will provide waste water treatment in the compliance with the urban waste waters discharge in the surface waters, pursuant to the DCM no. 177, dated 31.03.2005.

All construction related impacts, including the construction of the 1.2 km transmission line and re-routing of the 500m line, will be addressed through the Environmental Management Plan and the Site Safety File. In terms of plant operations, issues related to air quality, wastewater, solid waste and noise will be addressed through Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).

HPP Ashta is intended to be implemented under the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) according to the Kyoto protocol of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The project is expected to contribute to GHG emission reduction by displacing the electricity production requirement of fossil-fired power plants, with a total amount of 1.66 million ton CO<sub>2</sub> during the 21 years time period or annually about 80,000 tons of CO<sub>2</sub>. Energji Ashta has submitted the CDM “Project Idea Note” to the relevant authorities and has already received the “Letter of No Objection” to continue with the project with the aim of being registered as a CDM project with the UNFCCC. The validation process is still ongoing, and expected to be completed by end of January 2012.

#### PS4: Community Health, Safety & Security

The project area is located north of Bushati Commune, including the villages: Vau Dejes, Shelqet, Stajke, Mjede, Kosmac and Ashta. The general project area was formerly a forested area, now largely deforested and illegally used for gravel mining. The nearest village is about 600m from the project site. The immediate project area is flood-prone with low biological presence.

In addition to providing improved electric supply of households and businesses in the local area, the presence of the Ashta HPP reduces the costs of building flood and erosion protection infrastructure on the left of the Drin River, from the Spathara weir in the west of the village of Ashta, for more than 6.5km of length (for the villages of Shelqet, Stajke, Kosmac, Ashta). The HPP channel (5km) and the embankment (1.5km) downstream from Ashta II powerhouse will be sufficient to provide the needed protection. The potential for waters overtopping the embankment is low given the height of the channel especially for the surrounding villages. Irrigation supply of water for arable lands in the nearby villages shall continue at 20 m<sup>3</sup>/s, which is an improvement from past schemes.

The project sponsor will also develop and implement an emergency management plan in collaboration with the concerned local authorities. A World Bank project *Energy Community of South East Europe APL 5 Program – APL 5 for Albania Dam Safety* (P110481) is currently active. The project consists of physical infrastructure investments and technical assistance to contribute to safeguarding the major hydroelectric dams of Albania. The main focus will be on emergency preparedness and alarm systems installation for all Drin Cascade HPPs. It is expected that the systems installed by KESH (which meet the World Bank’s Dam Safety Safeguard) will apply to all HPPs, eventually including Ashta I and II to ensure community health and safety. Energji Ashta’s construction and operational management system will include continuous dam safety checks on the existing Spathara reservoir. The National Commission of Large Dams is the national entity responsible for dam safety for the Spathara reservoir facility. Energji Ashta’s operation and maintenance manual will be reviewed by the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Energy with the Commission’s inputs in order to obtain their approval.

Security Arrangements: During the construction period the site is watched by an unarmed security. For the operation period a video surveillance system will be installed, which will be connected to the main control room of HPP Ashta.

#### PS5: Land Acquisition & Involuntary Resettlement

The general area of land that will be taken up by the Ashta HPP is about 400 ha. 85.3% is state property, 12.9% belongs to the communes Bushati and Vau Dejes, and 1.8%, or less than 7 ha, is private ownership. Within this 7 ha, 45 parcels of land were acquired. Of these 45, four were completed under willing-buyer/willing-seller agreements and the remaining 41 parcels were expropriated according to national law, described below. An “Expropriation Plan” was developed and all payments have been made. No resettlement and no displacement of livelihoods were required for this project.

The expropriation procedure can be briefly described as follows. Expropriation is only permitted for projects in the public interest that cannot be realized without the expropriation. The project sponsor submits an application for expropriation to the government (Council of Ministers), and a Special Committee is established to ensure that the required documents are submitted. The project sponsor must explain the public benefit of the project and provide justification for the expropriation in the context of the project. The relevant line ministry will then enter into an agreement with the project sponsor setting out the way in which expropriation is to be carried out, following which the ministry will approach the affected property owners and simultaneously make public notification of the intended expropriation through national and local media. Land values are calculated using recent average market sales in the region, or if no sales have occurred the Special Committee fixes a price based on a set of published technical criteria. Owners of property to be expropriated have the opportunity to challenge the price determinations as well as seek redress and compensation in court. MIGA has reviewed this procedure and process and found it to be in compliance with PS5.

#### PS6: Biodiversity Conservation & Sustainable Natural Resource Management

The biotic environment of the Shkodra – Buna – Drin system has been significantly altered by past hydropower developments on the Drin River. The presence of the HPPs has had a negative impact on the quality and size of habitats, interruption of aquatic migration routes, sedimentation, and erosion. Low biotic activity in the project area has also been attributed to increased human activity and pressure, particularly in the last two decades. Human pressure has led to the destruction of riparian vegetation, unlawful fishing, dumping of urban waste and unlawful extraction of gravel and sands from the Drin riverbed. None of the HPPs or the Spathara weir provided for fish passes at the time of construction which fragmented riverine habitats and fish migration routes. As noted below, the project will include a fish pass to mitigate potential impacts in river systems in the lower reach of the Drin River.

The project will inundate some small vegetated islands in the Spathara reservoir due to increased water level from 21.5 to 23 m. There will be some biological stress in the riverbed (Spathara – Ashta about 5 km) due to the decrease in water flow and the fish presence is expected to decrease in this segment. Mitigation measures include: construction of a fish-pass (the first one to be introduced in Albania) in the area that divides Spathara reservoir from Drin River in the south. This could allow for migration of fish from Drin River to Spathara reservoir and Gjadri River. Reforestation activities and habitat rehabilitation in the riverbed will take place due to prevention

of gravel mining activities. About 3.5 ha of trees will be planted in accordance with the Local Environmental Action Plan. Planting native bushes and trees will be done south of the channel. In order to respect the need for minimum ecological water release in the existing riverbed, it was agreed at 10% of the water flow, which means release in the riverbed shall be on average 30m<sup>3</sup>/s or 10% of the average yearly inflow of Drin River to allow for increased biological activity.

There is a very limited number of wintering birds mainly in the Spathara reservoir. Only seagulls and cormorants were observed in the riverbed in the project area. This is likely due to human disturbance (hunting), small reservoir size, rapid flow of river in this area, and better habitat availability elsewhere. The project area is sparsely vegetated. The riverine vegetation includes shrubs and willow and poplar galleries.

Protected Area - In February 2006, the area covered by Lake Shkodra and the Buna River, at the border between Albania and Montenegro, was designated as a Ramsar site. The protected sector covers an area of 23,027 ha; however, this project does not affect the site or any cultural/historic heritage sites. The Lake Shkodra Ecosystem Managed Reserve (Cat. IV IUCN), which is a protected area, lies several miles further west of the project area. Despite the rich biodiversity and high ecological values represented in the extended Drin-Buna-Shkodra Lake ecosystem, the project area has low biodiversity and considered a heavily modified water body according to the Water Framework Directive; 2000/60/EC. In summary, the wider ecosystem and nearby protected areas supports outstanding variety, while the project area has low biotic activity.

## **F. Environmental Permitting Process and Community Engagement**

In accordance with the legal framework in Albania, the project sponsor has obtained all necessary permits to construct and operate the Ashta HPP. This includes the respective decisions of Albanian National Council of Territory Planning (ANCTP), the Council of Territory Planning (CTP) of the Commune of Bushati and Municipality of Vau Dejes, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Energy (METE), the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Water Administration (MoEFWA), Power Distribution Operation and the Electricity Regulatory Authority (ERE).

The METE organized two open public meetings in 2006 and 2007, for the discussions of the alternatives to the Ashta HPP including the Bushati HPP. The meetings were held in Vau Dejes with the participation of many stakeholders, including local government, the ERE, the local people affected by the project. Four sessions were conducted: February 2008 with Government officials and WB (IFC) at Vau Dejes, December 2008 with Verbund and authorities at Bushat, April 2009 with Verbund and authorities at Bushat, March 2010 with Verbund and authorities at Bushat commune (information session upon start of works). The EIA Report includes minutes of these meetings, a list of participants, and questions-answers for the December 2008 and April 2009 public consultations organized by Verbund. Concerns related to irrigation, agricultural lands, risk of floods, construction and local employment opportunities were discussed. Details of these meetings are documented in the EIA.

### **G. Availability of Documentation**

Attached to this ESRS is the Ashta Hydropower Plant Project, [Environmental Impact Assessment Report](#), May 2011 prepared by ENI Consulting

The above listed documentation is available electronically as PDF attachments to this ESRS at [www.miga.org](http://www.miga.org). It is also available for viewing at the following locations:

- Ministry of Environment, Rruga Durrësit, Nr. 27, Tirana, Albania